

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5530
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION USNATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BEL
COMUSFORAZ

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E.O. 11652: N/A
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SUBJECT: REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL WARNING

REF: (A) LISBON 3051 (DTG 241032Z APR 78), (B) FBIS 220100Y

SUMMARY: THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL APRIL 21 BROKE A
LONG SILENCE WITH A COMMUNIQUE ATTACKING THOSE SEEKING TO
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF POPULAR DISCONTENT TO DISCREDIT DEMOCRATIC
INSTITUTIONS. FOUR YEARS AFTER THE REVOLUTION, ITS SUPPORTERS
ARE ON THE DEFENSIVE AGAINST A GROWING CAMPAIGN FROM THE RIGHT.
END SUMMARY.

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1. RC HITS VERBAL TERRORISM: THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL
(RC) ON APRIL 21 ISSUED ITS FIRST COMMUNIQUE ON THE POLITICAL
SITUATION IN MANY MONTHS. THE RC STATEMENT MADE THE
FOLLOWING POINTS.

--EFFECTS OF AUSTERITY: PORTUGAL'S ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
LEND THEMSELVES TO ATTACKS ON DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF WORKING PEOPLE, REDUCED LIVING STANDARDS, YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT, AND DIFFICULT CONDITIONS FOR SMALL FARMERS HAVE LED TO FRUSTRATION AND DISCONTENT. THESE CONDITIONS LEND THEMSELVES TO ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGNS AGAINST THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER WHICH HAVE REACHED THEIR PEAK IN RECENT DAYS.

--VERBAL TERRORISM: SOME LEADERS AND POLITICAL FORCES HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF RESENTMENT AND DISILLUSIONMENT IN A GROWING CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE ORGANS OF SOVEREIGNTY, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT, AND AGAINST SOME POLITICAL AND MILITARY PERSONALITIES IN AN ATTEMPT TO ALTER THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AND TO OVERTHROW THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC. THE USE OF "VERBAL TERRORISM" INCLUDING FRONTAL ATTACKS ON THE CONSTITUTION AND DEMANDS FOR ITS EARLY REVISION DESERVE CONDEMNATION.

--AZORES INCIDENTS: THE RECENT ATTACKS ON ALMEIDA E SANTOS IN PONTA DELGADA DEMONSTRATE THAT THE INCREASING ATTACKS ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER MUST BE ANSWERED BY ENERGETIC AND OPPORTUNE MEASURES. IF THE STATE'S AUTHORITY IS WEAKENED, THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL REGIME ARE UNDERMINED.

--PROVOCATION IN ARMED FORCES: ATTACKS ON THE CONSTITUTION AND CATASTROPHIC ANALYSES OF THE FUTURE ARE INTENDED TO WEAKEN AND DISCREDIT THE REGIME. ATTEMPTS ARE UNDERWAY TO PROVOKE INSTABILITY IN THE ARMED FORCES TO DIVERT THEM FROM THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL MISSION. THE RC CONDEMNS SUCH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EFFORTS.

2. COMMENT: FOUR YEARS AFTER 1974, THE TABLES HAVE TURNED, AND SUPPORTERS OF THE REVOLUTION ARE ON THE DEFENSIVE, AS REFLECTED IN AN APRIL 22 "ESPRESSO" SERIES OF INTERVIEWS WITH KEY MILITARY AND POLITICAL FIGURES BUILT AROUND THE QUESTION: "WAS THE APRIL 25 REVOLUTION WORTHWHILE?" THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL COMMUNIQUE IS DIRECTED AT THE GROWING OFFENSIVE FROM THE RIGHT.
BLOOMFIELD

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